

ALASKA AFL-CIO

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VINCE BELTRAMI
Executive President



BRUCE LUDWIG
Secretary / Treasurer

Honorable Kurt Olson, Chair
House Labor & Commerce Committee
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Support for House Bill 316

Dear Chairman Olson:

We understand the myriad challenges that exist in the Worker's Compensation system. Among the most important considerations from the perspective of the largest labor organization in the state is that injured workers have as few obstacles as possible to getting effective treatment from the medical community in Alaska.

Of course, higher medical costs drive higher premium rates. However, HB 316 attempts to address the balance between the cost component and assuring access for injured workers to a willing and available medical provider community.

As a participant in the Alaska Medical Services Review Committee I supported and still support use of the Relative Value Scale Method the committee recommended in 2009 and which HB 316 seeks to adopt.

Mr. Chairman, I would also respectfully request that you consider amending Sec. 23.30.095.(j)(5) under the Medical treatments, services, and examinations section. Currently, this provision calls for "four public members who are not within the definition of "health care provider." While I currently sit as one of those public members, there is no guarantee it will be filled by someone from organized labor in the future. As the only advocate organizations for workers, that provision should be enshrined in the statute to assure someone who represents organized labor has a seat at the table. Please consider this simple amendment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Vince Beltrami".

Vince Beltrami
President